

**Preliminary Amendment of U.S. National Stage for International Application
PCT/EP00/06162 filed July 1, 2000**

In the Claims:

Please add new claims 19-38, as follows:

--19. (New) A process for preparing a crosslinker-free composition, said process comprising:

(a) providing an aqueous mixture of a chitosan, wherein the aqueous mixture has a viscosity of from 1,000 mPas to 100,000 mPas;

(b) combining a precipitant with the aqueous mixture to form a crosslinker-free chitosan composition; and

(c) drying the crosslinker-free chitosan composition to form a crosslinker-free three-dimensional structure.--

--20. (New) The process according to claim 19, wherein the aqueous mixture is present in a state selected from the group consisting of solutions and homogenous suspensions.--

--21. (New) The process according to claim 19, wherein the chitosan is present in an amount of from 0.1 to 15% by weight, based on the aqueous mixture.--

--22. (New) The process according to claim 19, wherein the aqueous mixture has a pH value of from 1 to 7.5.--

--23. (New) The process according to claim 19, wherein the aqueous mixture has a viscosity of from 10,000 mPas to 40,000 mPas.--

--24. (New) The process according to claim 19, wherein the chitosan comprises a cationically-derivatized chitosan.--

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--25. (New) The process according to claim 19, wherein the precipitant comprises an aqueous solution selected from the group consisting of aqueous solutions of hydrogen carbonates, carbonates, hydrogen phosphates, hydroxides of alkali metals, alkaline earth metals, ammonia and organic nitrogen bases, and combinations thereof.--

--26. (New) The process according to claim 19, wherein the precipitant comprises an aqueous solution of sodium hydrogen carbonate.--

--27. (New) The process according to claim 19, wherein the crosslinker-free chitosan composition formed in step (b) has a pH value of from 5 to 14.--

--28. (New) The process according to claim 19, wherein the drying of the crosslinker-free chitosan composition comprises freeze-drying.--

--29. (New) The process according to claim 19, further comprising combining one or more auxiliaries or additives with the aqueous mixture prior to drying.--

--30. (New) The process according to claim 19, further comprising combining one or more auxiliaries or additives with the crosslinker-free composition subsequent to drying.--

--31. (New) A process for preparing a crosslinker-free composition, said process comprising:

(a) providing an aqueous mixture of a cationically-derivatized chitosan, wherein the aqueous mixture has a viscosity of from 10,000 mPas to 40,000 mPas and a pH value of from 1 to 7.5;

(b) combining a precipitant selected from the group consisting of aqueous solutions of hydrogen carbonates, carbonates, hydrogen phosphates, hydroxides of

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alkali metals, alkaline earth metals, ammonia and organic nitrogen bases, and combinations thereof, with the aqueous mixture to form a crosslinker-free chitosan composition; and

(c) freeze-drying the crosslinker-free chitosan composition to form a crosslinker-free three-dimensional structure.--

--32. (New) A crosslinker-free, chitosan composition prepared by the process according to claim 19.--

--33. (New) A crosslinker-free, chitosan composition prepared by the process according to claim 23.--

--34. (New) A crosslinker-free, chitosan composition prepared by the process according to claim 25.--

--35. (New) A crosslinker-free, chitosan composition prepared by the process according to claim 28.--

--36. (New) A crosslinker-free, chitosan composition prepared by the process according to claim 31.--

--37. (New) A cosmetic preparation comprising a crosslinker-free, chitosan composition prepared by the process according to claim 19.--

--38. (New) A food additive comprising a crosslinker-free, chitosan composition prepared by the process according to claim 19.--

Please cancel claims 1-18, without prejudice.